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## Heart to Heart with Hardisty

As we enter our final quarter of fiscal year 2013, there are a lot of unknowns. But, as with all times of uncertainty, we will continue to push through and provide the quality service NRCS is known for.



We still are uncertain about Farm Bill and budget conditions. Recently, the Senate approved the new Farm Bill. The House approved to separate Food Stamps from the Farm Bill. Even with this action, the Farm Bill has a ways to go. As such, our budget will continue to be tight and purchasing will be at a minimum.



*Jane Hardisty*  
State Conservationist



The Conservation Cropping System Initiative (CCSI) is still going strong and Indiana continues to lead the country in the soil health movement. By focusing our attention on soil health and by educating our customers and the public about the positive impact healthy soils can have on productivity and conservation, we are helping Indiana farmers become more profitable and sustainable. I encourage each of you to continue taking an active role in promoting soil health in your communities and becoming very knowledgeable in CCSI and soil health.



The NRCS Administrative Solutions Project (ASP) recently created three temporary detail positions, called Continuity Managers. These three staff members will assist the Chief to carry out ASP. Elana Cass was chosen to fill one of these three positions. Roger Kult has been appointed as Acting State Administrative Officer while Elana is assigned to this detail.



I'm so proud to see Indiana NRCS employees going above and beyond expectations. To date, we have a 98% obligation rate for EQIP which relates to a lot of great conservation going on the ground in Indiana. Indiana NRCS has been successful thanks to our employees and the hard work they've dedicated to putting conservation on the ground. Keep up the good work!



Lastly, the Indiana State Fair is August 2-18. This is a great opportunity for our employees to engage with our partners and I encourage everyone to sign up for a shift at Pathway to Water Quality. **Pathway to Water Quality Exhibit** has been a popular fixture at the Indiana State Fairgrounds since 1993 making this year its 20th anniversary. Join us on August 14<sup>th</sup> as we will have a special ceremony at Pathway to dedicate the pond restoration project.

*Jane E. Hardisty*

**\*\*\* Employee Spotlight \*\*\***

**Lori Beeker, Soil Conservationist—Monticello Office**

**Q: As one of the newest Indiana NRCS Employees, please help us get to know you better. Are you a Hoosier native?**

Well, I am a Hoosier by birth, but I like to think I am actually from the Boilermaker state! But yes, I grew up on a row crop farm around Greenfield, IN which is in Hancock County.

**Q: You were an NRCS SCEP before becoming a full time employee. What office did you work in and how did that experience help you prepare for your current position?**

Last summer I was a SCEP (Student Career Experience Program) on the Greensburg Technical Team. As an Agricultural Economics major at Purdue, I went in to the job a little oblivious about engineering. Luckily everybody in the Southeast was very patient with me and provided me with lots of opportunities to get out into the field and really see NRCS in action! In particular I was exposed to some pretty unique situations because of the severe drought conditions, which gave me a greater understanding of the scope of the NRCS. I think most importantly though, I learned the value of a good sense of humor on the job!

**Q: What are you looking forward to most in your position?**

I would really like to get involved with some projects in White County that I can interact and develop relationships with farmers and landowners. I'm really looking forward to that aspect of the job. From my experience, people in agriculture are by far the most passionate about their career, and I love seeing farmers that truly

love and care about their farms and their land. I am really thankful to be able to be a part of that.

**Q: Do you have any hobbies or special interests that you can tell us about?**

When I can, I love helping my parents and grandpa on the farm. In the past I was very involved in 4-H. It meant a lot to me, and my family is still very involved as club leaders, project superintendents, and volunteers. I try to help out whenever I can make it back to Hancock County. I like fishing and tennis, although I'm not very good at either of them. And lastly I just enjoy spending time with family, friends, and my favorite guy.

**Q: Do you have any professional or personal goals for 2013?**

I mostly would just like to learn from the wide variety of people in the Northwest. Everyone has their different personalities, experiences, and way of explaining things and I believe there is a lot to take away from that.



*Lori in Montepulciano, a town in Tuscany during a Study Abroad trip*

## Hoosier Happenings

### KUDOS TO:

All of the **District Conservationists** for their efforts in securing the Cooperative Working Agreements with each county in the state. To date, we have received 82 of the proposed 92 agreements, with more coming in each day. We have received a tremendous amount of support and follow through from the DCs. We have surpassed our expectations due to their interactions with the Districts; they have been invaluable liaisons between the State Office and the counties.—Submitted by **Tiffany Davidson, Executive Assistant**

Special thanks to **Chris Torp, Gary Warring, Harold Thompson, and Connie Cleek** for helping us track down and photograph Kenny and Terry Cain who will be the ICP featured farmers on this year's Indiana State Fair Recipe Trail. Each year we feature a farmer or farm family that exemplifies good stewardship of the land to help fairgoers make the connection between the food they eat and the people that grow it. For everyone that completes the recipe trail, the Indiana Family of Farmers donates 1 pound of food to a local food bank – last year we donated over 2,000 pounds of food. By the way, this year's recipe is Moose Munch (it's the year of Popcorn)! - Submitted by **Becky Fletcher, State Public Affairs Specialist**

### Partnership Links

**IN Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Bi-Weekly**

Updates: [www.iaswcd.org/whatsnew/index.html](http://www.iaswcd.org/whatsnew/index.html)

**IN Conservation Partnership:** [www.iaswcd.org/icp/index.html](http://www.iaswcd.org/icp/index.html)

**IN Dept. of Environmental Management:** [www.in.gov/idem](http://www.in.gov/idem)

**IN Dept. of Natural Resources:** [www.in.gov/dnr](http://www.in.gov/dnr)

**IN State Dept. of Agriculture, Division of Soil Conservation:**

<http://www.in.gov/isda/soil/>

**Purdue University:** [www.purdue.edu](http://www.purdue.edu)

**USDA Farm Service Agency:** [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

### NRCS PRESENCE AT ASIAN FEST 2013

On May 11<sup>th</sup>, NRCS exhibited at the Sixth Annual Asian Fest at the White River State Park in downtown Indianapolis. Akhtar Soomro (Asian Pacific Islander SEPM and his family participated in the event which is part of the Cultural Trail's celebration, which is taking place in all the cultural districts in downtown Indianapolis. Each year, the Asian Fest selects one Asian country to feature with a special exhibit, and this year, the spotlight was on the Philippines. The festival includes a variety of entertainment, activities, exhibits and foods to help educate others about Asian culture.



Akhtar Soomro, NRCS Asian Pacific Islander SEPM, with president of AAAI (Asian American Alliance Inc.) Sonia Chen

### 20 YEARS OF PATHWAY TO WATER QUALITY



Help us celebrate Pathway to Water Quality's 20th Anniversary! Join us on August 14th at 9:30 AM to hear remarks from Governor Mike Pence as we recognize those that have been key to the Pathway's long-term success. You also want to visit the newly restored pond – a project that was completed to celebrate our anniversary. **Location: Indiana State Fair, Pathway to Water Quality Exhibit.**

## Hoosier Happenings (cont.)

### EARTH TEAM TIP OF THE MONTH

**Getting your “Local Working Group” together to prioritize county resource concerns? Capture their hours for Earth Team!**

The 2008 Farm Bill placed greater importance on the roles and responsibilities of the Local Working Groups in each county. As such, it designated the Local Working Groups as a subcommittee of the State Technical Committee. The Local Working Group’s role is to provide similar recommendations and advice as the State Technical Committee, with a focus on the resource priorities of the local community (county). The Local Working Group should consist of a diverse group of individuals from all public and private entities interested in conservation in the county.

**If you have landowners, associate supervisors, and other community members attend your Local Working Groups meeting, make sure to capture their hours for Earth Team!** Capturing their hours is easy - just submit a “one-time event” form that has the total number of people that participated in the meeting, how many total hours worked, and a brief description of what you accomplished (i.e. – prioritized county resource concerns). Submit the form and a list of the participants’ names (no signatures needed), and you have just submitted Earth Team hours! This is the **EASIEST** way to capture hours in your county and one way to help Indiana reach their 100% office participation goal!

### INDIANA NRCS EARTH TEAM HOURS TO DATE

We’ve been challenged again this year by National Headquarters to have 100% office participation in the Earth Team Volunteer program. While Indiana has been extremely successful in obtaining ETV hours, we have never been able to report 100% office participation. Let’s make 2013 our year!

**TOTAL VOLUNTEERS: 164**  
**TOTAL HOURS: 2,242.50**  
**TOTAL OFFICES REPORTED: 21**



### NRCS NATIONAL PHOTO GALLERY REVISED

The NRCS Photo Gallery contains natural resource and conservation related photos from across the USA. Thousands of new images are now available in the gallery and more will be added on a regular basis. Visit the photo gallery at: [photogallery.nrcs.usda.gov](http://photogallery.nrcs.usda.gov).

Photos in the gallery are available free of charge in two common image formats: TIFF or JPEG. TIFF images are 32 bit RGB color, ranging from 6MB to 12MB in size. JPEG images are 24 bit RGB color ranging from 200KB to 400KB in size.



*Photo courtesy of USDA NRCS*

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## PERSONNEL UPDATE

### SELECTIONS FROM VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Shasta Woodard selected for the District Conservationist position at the Vevay Field Office effective 7-28-13

Albert Cleaver selected for the Field Operations Assistant position at the Southeast Area Office effective 7-28-13

### RETIREMENTS

Fay Earnhart, Soil Conservationist at the Albion CIT Office effective 6-1-13

Steve Chapman, Engineering Technician at the Rensselaer CIT Office effective 6-29-13

### REASSIGNMENTS

Vince Pitstick converted from Pathways Program to Soil Conservationist at the Versailles Field Office effective 6-30-13

Hilary Barnhart, District Conservationist at the Richmond FO reassigned to Soil Conservationist on the Albion CIT effective 7-28-13

## NEW INDIANA NRCS WEBSITE

As you may already be aware, the Indiana NRCS website has been revamped to mirror the National NRCS website. This new site went live on June 11, 2013. Please bear with us while we continue to update this website and make it the great resource for employees and public alike. If you have any questions or comments about the new website or its content, please contact Kris Vance at: [kris.vance@in.usda.gov](mailto:kris.vance@in.usda.gov)

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/in/home/>



## Mark Your Calendar

### JULY

- 16: Area Conservationist Meeting
- 18: IFEC Meeting
- 22: Technical Staff Meeting  
Conservation Engineering Boot Camp
- 24: Northwest Area Meeting  
Southwest Area Meeting
- 25: Indiana Soil Survey Planning Conference
- 31: Mentoring Training

### AUGUST

- 1: Mentoring Training
- 2-18: Indiana State Fair
- 6-7: LT Ethics Refresher Training
- 8: Northeast Area Partnership Meeting
- 13: SAC/FAC Meeting
- 14: Southeast Area Meeting
- 15: FOA/AEPS Specialist Meeting
- 20: Area Conservationist Meeting  
ICP Leaders Meeting
- 21: Leadership Team Meeting

You can find up-to-date information about upcoming events on the Indiana SharePoint site at:

<https://nrcs.sc.egov.usda.gov/central/in/Lists/Calendar/calendar.aspx>